

AD-A279 500



①

NAVAL WAR COLLEGE  
Newport, R.I.

OPERATIONS ANALYSIS: ANZIO

by

W.J. Clark  
Lieutenant Commander, U.S. Navy

DTIC  
ELECTED  
MAY 23 1994  
S G D

A paper submitted to the faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

Signature: Ward Clark

22 June 1994

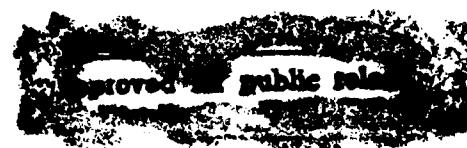
Paper directed by Captain H. Ward Clark  
Chairman, Department of Military Operations

94-15394



DTIC EDITION 1

94 5 20 191



## REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

1a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION <b>UNCLASSIFIED</b>		1b. RESTRICTIVE MARKINGS	
2a. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION AUTHORITY		3. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY OF REPORT DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A: APPROVED FOR PUBLIC RELEASE; DISTRIBUTION IS UNLIMITED.	
2b. DECLASSIFICATION/DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE			
4. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S)		5. MONITORING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S)	
6a. NAME OF PERFORMING ORGANIZATION OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT	6b. OFFICE SYMBOL (If applicable) C	7a. NAME OF MONITORING ORGANIZATION	
6c. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code) NAVAL WAR COLLEGE NEWPORT, R.I. 02841		7b. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code)	
8a. NAME OF FUNDING/SPONSORING ORGANIZATION	8b. OFFICE SYMBOL (If applicable)	9. PROCUREMENT INSTRUMENT IDENTIFICATION NUMBER	
8c. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code)		10. SOURCE OF FUNDING NUMBERS PROGRAM ELEMENT NO.      PROJECT NO.      TASK NO.      WORK UNIT ACCESSION NO.	
11. TITLE (Include Security Classification) OPERATIONS ANALYSIS: ANZIO (U)			
12. PERSONAL AUTHOR(S) LCDR W.J. CLARK, USN			
13a. TYPE OF REPORT FINAL	13b. TIME COVERED FROM _____ TO _____	14. DATE OF REPORT (Year, Month, Day) 8 FEB 94	15. PAGE COUNT 34
16. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTATION A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Operations. The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.			
17. COSATI CODES FIELD      GROUP      SUB-GROUP		18. SUBJECT TERMS (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number) DEVELOPMENT; STALEMATE; EXECUTION; ANALYSIS; FORCE ACTION	
19. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number) THE COMBINED JOINT OPERATION IN CONNECTION WITH THE AMPHIBIOUS LANDING AT ANZIO IS ANALYZED BY COMPARING TODAY'S CONCEPT OF OPERATIONAL ART WITH THE OPERATIONAL DESIGNS AND OPERATIONAL PLANS OF THE ALLIED FORCES OF 1944. THE MILITARY ACTIONS ARE EXAMINED TO DETERMINE THE OPERATIONAL FAILURES AND TO VALIDATE CURRENT COMBINED JOINT OPERATIONAL PRINCIPLES. THE PRINCIPLE FINDING IN EXAMINING THE PLANNING AND EXECUTION BY THE ALLIED FORCES IS THAT INADEQUATE LOGISTICAL CAPABILITY COMPLICATED OPERATIONAL PLANNING, COMPROMISED OPERATIONAL PRINCIPLES AND LIMITED FORCE EFFECTIVENESS IN ATTAINING THE OBJECTIVE.			
20. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY OF ABSTRACT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNCLASSIFIED/UNLIMITED <input type="checkbox"/> SAME AS RPT <input type="checkbox"/> DTIC USERS		21. ABSTRACT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION <b>UNCLASSIFIED</b>	
22a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE INDIVIDUAL CHAIRMAN, OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT		22b. TELEPHONE (Include Area Code) 841-3414	22c. OFFICE SYMBOL C

Abstract of  
OPERATIONS ANALYSIS: ANZIO

The combined joint operation in connection with the amphibious landing at Anzio is analyzed by comparing today's concept of operational art with the operational designs and operational plans of the Allied forces of 1944. The military actions are examined to determine the operational failures and to validate current combined joint operational principles. The principle finding in examining the planning and execution by the Allied forces is that inadequate logistical capability complicated operational planning, compromised operational principles and limited force effectiveness in attaining the objective.

Accesion For	
NTIS	CRA&I
DTIC	TAB
Unannounced	
Justification _____	
By _____	
Distribution / _____	
Availability Codes	
Dist	Avail and/or Special
A-1	

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
<b>ABSTRACT.....</b>	<b>ii</b>
I <b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
The Problem.....	1
II <b>STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT.....</b>	<b>2</b>
Allied Difference of Opinion.....	2
The Trident Conference.....	4
Effects on the Italian Campaign.....	5
III <b>DEVELOPMENT OF A PLAN.....</b>	<b>8</b>
The Beginning.....	8
Stalemate.....	9
An Amphibious Plan Emerges.....	10
Execution of the Original Plan.....	11
Operational Critique.....	11
IV <b>ALLIED OPERATIONAL DESIGN EVOLVES.....</b>	<b>14</b>
The Follow on Plan.....	14
V <b>ANALYSIS OF ALLIED COMBAT ACTIONS.....</b>	<b>19</b>
Force Action.....	19
Analysis of Force Action.....	19
VI <b>CRITIQUE OF THE OPERATIONAL PLAN.....</b>	<b>22</b>
VII <b>CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>APPENDIX I-- A SITUATIONAL MAP OF ITALY.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>NOTES.....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY.....</b>	<b>30</b>

## OPERATIONS ANALYSIS: ANZIO

### CHAPTER I

#### INTRODUCTION

The Problem. The outcome of the amphibious landing at Anzio was one of the great disappointments of the Italian Campaign in World War II. Code named SHINGLE, the landing pitted Allied combined joint forces against determined and resilient German forces. The combined joint operation was planned and executed without the advantage of today's operational concepts and therefore experienced shortfalls which resulted in the failure to obtain the objective, the capture of Rome.

This analysis of Anzio will focus on the principles of operational art with regard to the planning and execution of the amphibious landing by the Allied forces. Consideration will be given to the strategic environment in which logistics set the operational limits, influenced planning, and shaped the operational designs. The identification of the operational failures, will validate today's operational principles for future military operations in the combined joint arena.

## CHAPTER II

### STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

Allied Difference of Opinion. The noted military historian Martin Blumenson, described Anzio as a "gamble", born out of impatience and executed in haste, the offspring "of resentment and conflict between allies. The seed of Anzio was a difference of opinion and the seed was nourished on long-term argument."<sup>1</sup> The failure of Anzio finds its origins in this conflict of war objectives which focused manpower and materiel away from Allied efforts in the Mediterranean theater and toward a cross-channel invasion.

Prior to entering World War II the United States had made plans to join the British and Russians in a Europe first strategy. This was clearly outlined in the ABC-1 strategic objectives which were:

1. The early defeat of Germany, the predominate member of the Axis, the principal military effort of the United States being exerted in the Atlantic and European area, the decisive theater. Operations in other theaters were to be conducted in such a manner as to facilitate the main effort.
2. The maintenance of British and Allied positions in the Mediterranean area.
3. The strategic defensive in the Far East, with the U.S. Fleet employed offensively in the manner best calculated to weaken Japanese economic power, and support the defense of the Malay Barrier by directing Japanese strength away from Malaysia.<sup>2</sup>

From these stated objectives three conclusions can be drawn. First, the Allied priority was to focus on the quick defeat of

Germany by way of the continent. Second, all other theaters are secondary. Third, economy of force would apply to these secondary theaters in order to mass military power in the decisive theater of continental Europe. Economy of force would determine the operational limits in secondary theaters. Even though the British accepted these major strategic objectives a basic underlying disagreement concerning the best way to eventually defeat the Axis in Europe emerged. It remained a planning issue between the Allies until the Normandy landings in 1944.

The British were focused on "successive stabs around the periphery to bleed the enemy to death, like jackals worrying a lion before springing at his throat."<sup>3</sup> Britain had historically supported a peripheral strategy to defeat her enemies. It should be noted that during World War I, Churchill had eagerly supported this strategy which resulted in the failure of the Gallipoli landing. The British military leadership and especially Churchill, believed that the Allies should attack the Axis on their periphery: at places like Norway, North Africa, Sicily, or Italy, thereby weakening the enemy to such an extent as to render them virtually powerless to resist a final massive assault into the German heartland.<sup>4</sup> By contrast, the United States believed that a quick and decisive defeat of Germany could be achieved by way of a cross-channel invasion at the earliest possible date. The basis of this view was that the channel area was the only

place where a massive offensive could be launched in the near future. Additionally, there was the assurance of superior air cover and the short lines of communication would minimize the difficulties of transporting troops and supplies.<sup>5</sup>

American planners would not waver from the original priorities set forth in ABC-1. After America officially entered the war, a series of conferences were held to determine the military direction of the war. The British continued to press their peripheral strategy and were successful at introducing America into the European war by way of North Africa. This did not reflect a change in American strategy it was more a reflection of the initial military realities. The Allies were far from ready to launch a cross-channel invasion. During the opening years of the war British planners had their way. It was not until the Trident Conference that American planners brought the direction of the war back in line with the original strategy.

The Trident Conference. In May 1943 this conference convened with the express purpose of forming "the specific strategy to which the movements of the land, sea and air forces of the Allies was translated into firm commitments."<sup>6</sup> The British had never let go of their peripheral strategy. They now pressed to follow up North Africa and Sicily with an invasion of Italy. The Americans countered with questions as to how that strategy would affect the build-up for ROUNDUP.<sup>7</sup>

The most significant agreement to come out of the conference stated that equipment and forces would be built up in Britain to support a landing on the continent of Europe with a target date of 1 May 1944. The main thrust of Allied strategy was confirmed. Maximum effort would focus on ROUNDUP, renamed OVERLORD, and no other operation was to take precedence over its execution. The Mediterranean was to become a secondary theater of operations behind continental Europe and the Pacific.

Effects on the Italian Campaign. The husbanding and allocating of limited materiel and manpower would define the operational limits of the Italian Campaign. Economy of force would determine the scope of the Italian Campaign. In order to be strong at the decisive point, the cross-channel invasion, the Italian Campaign would necessarily take on secondary importance. The "logistics tail would wag the dog". Focused on the availability of amphibious landing craft, specifically, LST's, Allied planners would wrestle with the problem of inadequate logistic capability. Logistics however, was not the only problem born out of the priority of OVERLORD.

During the final planning and execution phases of the Anzio operation there would be major reassessments of Allied commanders in the Mediterranean Theater to deal with the priority of OVERLORD. Among them was GEN Eisenhower, Commander in Chief Mediterranean, who was replaced by British GEN Henry Wilson on 8 January 1944. General Bernard

Montgomery, commander of the British Eighth Army, who was replaced by LGEN Oliver Leese on 1 January 1944.

Additionally, GEN Bradley and GEN Patton would transfer from the theater. Those who remained were: combined Fifteenth Army Group commander, British GEN Harold Alexander and U.S. Fifth Army commander, GEN Mark Clark.

From these reassessments two observations are worth noting. The first is that the Allies most capable planners and operational commanders are targeted for the cross-channel effort. Second, all of the upper echelon operational leadership is now British. This British imbalance became a planning factor as it gave Churchill the opportunity to push the Anzio landing through and it brought to light the difficulties of command and control in the combined joint operational arena.

The power which Churchill wielded in the way of command and control was very much contrary to the American practice. According to American military custom, the theater commander exercised a great deal of independent control. He exercised control under the supervision of his superiors. For example, Eisenhower operated under the Combined Chiefs of Staff. The function of the higher echelon command was guidance rather than command. In contrast, the British theater commander was under much closer supervision and was in a way the offspring of the British Imperial General Staff who "believed warfare to important to be entrusted to Generals... that operations were

too vital to be entirely confided to the judgment of the field commanders".<sup>8</sup> The problem however, goes one step further for the British Imperial General Staff were subordinate to Churchill. This politically oriented command and control relationship will pressure operational planners to downplay limited logistical capability and lead them to create a plan that would jeopardize the lives of several thousand Allied soldiers on the beaches of Anzio.

## CHAPTER III

### DEVELOPMENT OF A PLAN

The Beginning. Churchill and Roosevelt having obtained a tremendous victory in North Africa were attempting to keep the operational momentum moving in anticipation of an eventual cross-channel invasion. The Italian Campaign was primarily brought about by the efforts of Churchill. Churchill's Chief of the Imperial General Staff, GEN Alan Brooke, convinced him that the time was inappropriate for the cross-channel invasion and opportunity should be sought elsewhere. Churchill saw Italy as a stepping stone to the "soft underbelly" of the Axis southern flank, the Balkans. The strategic aim was to knock Italy out of the war while forcing Hitler to commit more of his troops to the Italian Theater. The United States agreed to the plan as a preliminary step to the cross-channel invasion when convinced that it would draw German assets south and facilitate the cross-channel effort. This combined with the military reality of not being able to execute a cross-channel invasion in the immediate future set the Italian Campaign in motion.<sup>9</sup>

Operation HUSKY was launched on 10 July 1943, and met little resistance in Sicily. The invasion effectively knocked Italy out of the war. Allied command of the sea and air was achieved. Hitler was forced to commit more troops in order to maintain control of Italy.

HUSKY was followed by the successful invasion of Italy at Salerno and Taranto on 9 September 1943. Within two months the British Eighth Army, on the Adriatic coast, had driven to a position just south of the Sangro river and the U.S. Fifth Army, on the Tyrrhenian coast, had driven just south of the Garigliano and Rapido rivers.

Stalemate. The early advances of the Allies began to stall as they came to the mountainous terrain of southern Italy. Gen Kesselring, German Commander in Chief South-West, had delayed the Allied advance long enough to build a defense barrier across the Italian peninsula named the Gustav Line. This barrier stretched from the Tyrrhenian on the west coast to the Adriatic on the east coast, its pivot point was the mountain mass of Cassino, which completely dominated the principle valley that led through the defensive lines towards Rome.<sup>10</sup> Strengthening the German position was the geographical orientation of the rivers which were for the most part parallel to the Allied advance.

The Italian Campaign had become a bitter linear confrontation. Direct frontal assault by the Allies was difficult and dangerous due to the German fortifications as well as the terrain. The Germans operated from superior interior lines. The road and railway system favored the German position enabling them to quickly maneuver their weaker forces. In addition, the two major lines of communication: route 6, which ran through Cassino and up the Liri and Sacco

valley's, and route 7, which traversed the western coastal plain, passed through heavily defended German positions. The combination of defenses, terrain, and unfavorable winter weather virtually brought the Allies to a standstill so that by 15 November 1943 they were some 80 miles from Rome. It was this stalemate that set the dynamics of Anzio in motion.

An Amphibious Plan Emerges. Pressure mounted to break the stalemate and take Rome in the process. Eisenhower and Alexander agreed that an amphibious end run was needed to open up the stalled front. In late October 1943, Clark's Fifth Army planners were tasked to examine the feasibility of such an operation. The planners concluded that Anzio would be feasible but, owing to the lack of logistical support which could at most sealift only a single division, it would be imperative that Fifth Army advance further north in order to support and link up with the amphibious force.

In early November, Alexander issued a directive which laid out the scope of the plan. The planned operation was divided into three phases:

Phase 1. The British Eighth Army will drive up the Adriatic coast across the Sangro river to the town of Pescara and maneuver west toward Rome in order to threaten the German line of communication through the town of Avezzano.

Phase 2. The U.S. Fifth Army will cross the Garigliano and Rapido rivers, advance up the Liri and Sacco valleys, and capture the town of Frosinone.

Phase 3. When drives by Eighth and Fifth armies come within supporting distance, the Fifth Army will launch an amphibious landing in the area of Anzio directed on the Colli Laziali, a mountain formation just south of Rome

which bisects the two main lines of communication between Rome and the German Tenth Army operating against Fifth Army.<sup>11</sup>

From the directive the commanders intent is clear. The landing was preconditioned on the ability of the Eighth Army and the main body of Fifth Army to advance to their objectives. The drive by Eighth and Fifth armies would facilitate the landing at Anzio.

Execution of the Original Plan. On 20 November 1943, phase one commenced with an attack by the British Eighth Army. Montgomery's forces had established bridgeheads across the Sangro river but due to stiffening German resistance and slow going in muddy terrain the drive was stopped short of their objective, the line of communication which ran to Avezzano.

Phase two was kicked off by Clark's Fifth Army on 1 December. Although some progress was made the thrust failed to cross either the Garigliano or Rapido rivers and was well short, some 30 miles short, of achieving their objective, the capture of Frosinone. Because neither phase had proceeded according to plan, Clark wisely canceled the Anzio landing.

Operational Critique. From an operational perspective the plan failed in adhering to the operational principles of mass, economy of force and unity of command. While Allied forces had correctly identified the decisive point, the Cassino area which led to the Liri and Sacco valleys directly to Rome, they failed to mass their combat power at this decisive point. Allied planners repeatedly phased their attacks across the

entire length of the Gustav Line, once each phase had reached its culmination point the next phase was executed. The Allies were also in the habit of alternating attacks between the Eighth Army and the Fifth Army. This effectively compromised any chance of truly surprising the Germans. The Germans noted these habits and exploited the alternate phasing by quickly maneuvering and reinforcing their forces against the direction of the attack. The Allies should have considered either a simultaneous attack or focused their attack towards the decisive area, Cassino.

The Allies failed to exercise economy of force. Again the key to capturing Rome was to secure a bridgehead across the Rapido river in the vicinity of Cassino which would open up the Liri and Sacco valleys. The Allies could have exercised economy of force along the coastlines and concentrated their combat strength on Cassino.

Finally, the issue of unity of command crops up. The problem was how to combine the British and American forces so that they could fight together and realize the sum strength of their whole as opposed to the sum strength of their parts. Commanders of both countries were reluctant to combine their forces to fight side by side. This reluctance was born out of mutual mistrust, had its origins in North Africa and appears to be totally unfounded. The result was a watering down of the potential combat capability of the combined force. This is clearly evident in the case of Fifth Army's combat

potential. Under Clark's Fifth Army control was the British X Corps. Clark never allowed this corps to fight in close concert with American troops. The X Corps was always considered separate from the American forces and as a result Clark never cashed in on Fifth Army's full potential. In a combat theater where resources were limited the need for close cooperation and coordination of the Allied forces was critical to operational success. The difficulty of employing combined combat forces persisted during the Italian Campaign and grew as the Allied forces were further augmented by New Zealanders, French, Polish, Moroccan, and Algerian troops.

## CHAPTER IV

### ALLIED OPERATIONAL DESIGN EVOLVES

The Follow on Plan. It was clear to Allied planners that an amphibious landing conditioned on the successful frontal assaults by Eighth and Fifth armies was futile. It was equally obvious that continued frontal assaults against the strongly fortified Gustav Line would cost too many lives. In view of the above considerations on 10 December Clark suggested removing the precondition of the original plan and supported executing SHINGLE "without waiting until the overland attack was within supporting distance. Once in, the landing force would consolidate and make a stand until Fifth Army came up. This conception would demand both a larger force and a resupply."<sup>12</sup>

The concept of operation was modified. The drive by Fifth Army to Frosinone and the drive by the amphibious force to the Colli Laziali were removed from Alexander's original directive. Clark's intent was for Fifth Army to draw German forces from the Anzio area to facilitate the landing with the expectation that the landing would cause Kesselring to withdrawal forces from the Gustav Line to deal with the landing. This in turn would facilitate Fifth Army's breakthrough of the Gustav Line and consequent drive up the Liri and Sacco valleys. More troops and more landing craft would be required. The precondition now became a matter of

manpower, logistical capability, and sustainability. Even as Clark briefed Eisenhower on 18 December the overshadowing issue of landing craft availability brought Clark back to reality. There were not enough LST's in the theater and the LST's that were available were scheduled for transfer to England. OVERLORD was still the priority so Clark torpedoed his plan for SHINGLE and delivered the following advisory to Alexander:

"I feel I must recommend the cancellation of Operation SHINGLE in January. The limiting date of January 15 makes it impracticable. I will continue planning SHINGLE in the hope that craft will be made available at a later date, when it will be possible to execute the operation with proper preparation, supported by the main part of the Fifth Army. It is my urgent request that all efforts be made to get necessary craft for a later time."<sup>13</sup>

It finally appeared that SHINGLE had succumbed to the priority of OVERLORD, however, during the conception of this plan Eisenhower was replaced by British GEN Wilson. This solidified British control of the Italian Campaign which meant that it would fall victim to the desires of Churchill. Churchill's obsession with the capture of Rome brought SHINGLE back to life.

Churchill set the plan before Roosevelt. The key to the operation boiled down to LST availability. Churchill's plan required landing three divisions to assure success. Churchill convinced Roosevelt that by delaying for just a few weeks the transfer of LST's to England the Allies could break the Gustav Line and capture Rome. A compromise was reached in which Churchill settled for the landing of two divisions.<sup>14</sup> It

should be noted that the decision to compromise on the number of divisions was purely a British decision. Clark, whose Fifth Army was tasked to plan this operation, was not in attendance at the meeting in which Alexander, under pressure from Churchill, agreed to the compromise. Churchill, a political leader with Gallipoli to his credit, was gambling on surprise and air superiority to pull off the operation.

Alexander issued the following outline for the operation:

1. On the southern front the Fifth Army was to make as strong a thrust as possible towards Cassino and Frosinone shortly prior to the assault landing to draw in enemy reserves which might be employed against the landing forces and then to create a breach in his front through which every opportunity will be taken to link up rapidly with the sea-borne operation.
2. The Eighth Army would make what would amount to a holding attack to prevent the Germans from transferring divisions opposed to it to new positions opposite the Fifth Army.
3. The Fifth Army would launch an amphibious operation with two divisions, plus certain attached units, on beaches south of Rome. The attack would be directed on the Colli Laziali, a commanding hill mass astride the vital communication routes supplying the German right wing on the front opposite the main part of the Fifth Army. The date for this operation was to fall between 20 and 31 January, and to be as near the 20th as possible.<sup>15</sup>

Allied forces were to be reorganized to give the American VI Corps, under the command of MGEN John Lucas, the U.S. 3rd Division and the British 1st Division along with follow-up elements of the U.S. 1st Armor Division and the 45th Infantry Division. The date agreed on to launch the landing was 22 January 1944.

The operation was to be supported by both Naval and Air components. The Naval component designated Task Force 81 under VADM Lowry was to:

1. Transport and provide follow on logistical support.
2. Provide a cover plan to deceive the Germans as to the time and place of the landing.
3. Provide on call Naval gunfire support.<sup>16</sup>

The Air component would provide the following:

1. Preliminary bombing from January 1 to 14 to disrupt rail communications in Central Italy and to destroy or cripple the Luftwaffe.
2. Intensive efforts from January 15 to 21 to isolate the Anzio battle area by stepped-up attacks on roads and railways north of Rome and all roads leading to Anzio from the south.
3. From the day of the landings, the isolation of the Anzio beachhead through interdiction of German reinforcements and close air support of VI Corps.<sup>17</sup>

The concept of the operation was to use Eighth Army as a holding force. Fifth Army was to draw in Kesselring's reserves from Rome which would facilitate VI Corps' Anzio landing, then according to Alexander, the Anzio force would drive to the Colli Laziali and cut the German lines of communication. With the lines cut, Alexander expected the Germans to withdraw forces from the Gustav Line which would facilitate Fifth Army's breakthrough. The Fifth Army would then join up with VI Corps and march on Rome.

This concept, however, was far from how Clark envisioned the operation especially since it was to be executed with only two divisions. Clark believed that the landing itself would

cause the Germans to withdraw forces from the Gustav Line. He expected the Germans to react quickly and counterattack in much the same way as they had done at Salerno where Clark almost lost the battle. Clark was unwilling to commit his forces to a drive toward the Colli Laziali until the beachhead was secure, sufficient supplies were built up, and more troops were brought in to support the drive. His J-4 cell estimated that , barring combat losses and weather delays, the LST's could be turned around in three days. Clark therefore, without Alexander's knowledge, issued the following directive to Lucas' VI Corps:

- (a) To seize and secure a beachhead in the vicinity of Anzio.
- (b) Advance on the Colli Laziali.<sup>18</sup>

By using the vagueness of the word "advance" Clark changed the primary mission of the VI Corps from Alexander's cutting the lines of communication in the Colli Laziali to seizing and securing the beachhead.

## CHAPTER V

### ANALYSIS OF ALLIED ACTION

Force Action. Six principle actions comprised the Anzio operation from 1 January to 4 March 1944. Selected events from these interactions serve to illustrate the successes and failures of the previous planning and operational design. The principle actions were:

1. Air interdiction by the Allied Air Force to cut German lines of communication and knock out the Luftwaffe. (1-21 January)
2. Fifth Army's attack across the Garigliano and Rapido rivers and German reaction. (17 January-3 February)
3. VI Corps landing, beachhead consolidation and German reaction. (22 January)
4. VI Corps drive to the Colli Laziali. (1-3 February)
5. First German counterattack at Anzio. (3-12 February)
6. Second German counterattack at Anzio. (20 February-4 March)

Analysis of Force Action. Several facts become clear from the action. First, Allied interdiction of German lines of communication and the elimination of the Luftwaffe achieved some success but was somewhat short of expectations. Although many of the key transport facilities were destroyed or severely damaged the Germans had time to repair the facilities, and transport troops and supplies to the front. The Allied Air Force should have planned to restrike the key facilities for the duration of the operation. As for

destruction of the Luftwaffe, the Allies had tremendous initial success, especially against Luftwaffe reconnaissance aircraft. Their destruction significantly added to the security and surprise of the landing. On the negative side however, the Germans were quick to repair airfields and fly in replacement aircraft. These replacements would incessantly torment the beachhead. Once again, the planners needed to include follow-up strikes.

Second, Fifth Army's attack on the Gustav Line successfully caused Kesselring to commit his reserves from the Rome area thereby facilitating an unopposed landing. However, the Fifth Army was unable to exploit initial bridgeheads across the Garigliano and Rapido rivers in order to drive up the Liri and Sacco valleys.

Third, the VI Corps achieved complete surprise and established a beachhead virtually unopposed, however, due to a lack of initial combat strength, the result of inadequate logistics, they were unable to exploit the situation and drive toward the Colli Laziali. Additionally, the landing achieved only a tactical surprise. The Germans had expected the Allies to attempt a landing for some time. Kesselring had drawn up contingency plans to mobilize and reorganize troops to meet such a crisis. Within a few hours of the landing these plans, code named RICHARD, were activated and German reinforcements were enroute to contain the beachhead. Kesselring was not under sufficient pressure from the Fifth Army to cause removal

of significant forces from the Rapido, Garigliano, or Cassino area, therefore the Gustav Line was not substantially weakened and Fifth Army was unable to exploit the situation. The lack of follow-up logistics support delayed the rapid buildup of VI Corps forces, specifically, their armor and artillery, which was on the second wave.

Fourth, the VI Corps drive to the Colli Laziali was met by significant numbers of German forces. In the race to build up forces the Germans significantly outpaced the Allies.

Finally, the VI Corps reached their offensive culmination point and had to go on the defensive. The result was a stalemate in the Anzio area. The Allies held on due to the seaward logistical lifeline.

## CHAPTER VI

### CRITIQUE OF THE OPERATIONAL PLAN

The principle failure of the Allied operational plan was disregard of Allied logistical capability which set the operational limits. The basic concept of SHINGLE had tremendous promise. The problem was that VI Corps could only achieve their stated goal of cutting the German lines of communication by employing a significantly larger force and that force had to be rapidly inserted in order for it to be effective. Logistical constraints severely reduced the size of that initial force and the rapid buildup of reinforcements resulting in a failure of the operation.

Churchill had counted on surprise and overwhelming air superiority to carry the operation. Although plans were developed to optimize surprise and Allied air power, both had there limitations.

Allied planners had an excellent deception plan. They used false transmissions, employed a deceptive naval force, concealed the formation and movement of the VI Corps, and knocked out the Luftwaffe reconnaissance aircraft but, as successful as they were, they achieved only temporary surprise. When the surprise is temporary, quick exploitation is critical. Because the initial landing force was small Kesselring was afforded the time to execute a mobilization and reorganization plan to meet the threat. By the time Lucas had

landed sufficient forces to drive to the Colli Laziali, Kesselring had outpaced VI Corps' buildup to such an extent that Kesselring could defend and then counterattack.

Allied air power had its limitations. The planners carefully outlined a detailed and massive interdiction schedule. Although the Air Force expended a total of 12,248 tons of ordnance during 22,850 sorties, they were unable to completely isolate the battlefield and prevent German reinforcements from getting through.<sup>19</sup> The interdiction was little more than a temporary difficulty for the Germans. The integration of air power into the plan was appropriate but, planners can not rely on air power alone to carry an operation.

Some would argue, as the British did, that the operation failed because Lucas did not quickly seize upon the principle of offensive and exploit the initiative. Both Clark and Lucas understood the military reality of the situation. That was why Clark changed VI Corps' mission. If Lucas had haphazardly driven to the Colli Laziali he would have extended VI Corps' line of communication beyond its ability to maintain security. A maneuver by inadequate forces may have gained initial positional advantage but that advantage would have quickly been reversed. A twenty mile drive to the Colli Laziali would have increased the vulnerability of VI Corps. VI Corps freedom of action would have been nullified and defeat in

detail, by numerically superior German forces, would have followed.

## CHAPTER VII

### CONCLUSION

"Logistics provides the ability to mass combat power. It is a way of structuring a battle, campaign or strategic setting. It is calculated to create possibilities for future force utilization. Logistics determines how, when and where the force arrives in theater; where and when combat power can be massed. Logistics underwrites the concept of operations and the scheme of maneuver and is the fulcrum upon which leverage can be created."<sup>20</sup>

The strategic objectives for World War II laid out in no uncertain terms the priority and focus of the Allied war effort. The imminent shift of resources and logistical capability left Fifth Army planners scrambling to create a plan that would break a stalemate and reel in a grand political prize. Misguided by the lofty expectations of a political leader they executed a plan that should never have been executed, a plan that overlooked the criticality and inadequacy of their logistical capability.

The Anzio operational planners failed to effectively cope with the logistical realities of the Italian Campaign. In so doing they downplayed the importance of logistics, compromised operational principles and limited force effectiveness. Anzio therefore provides ample validation of our operational principles but, how does it apply to the Navy's present focus?

"From the sea" underscores the importance of logistics capability because it is the backbone of the concept. Concentrating on littoral and maneuver warfare from the sea we

have committed ourselves to a strategy which hinges on our logistical capability. Not only must we possess the logistical capability to provide the initial effort during crisis situations, we must be able to sustain that effort over an indeterminable length of time. It is imperative that we continue to build a force to meet the ever expanding logistical requirements. It is equally imperative that operational planners understand the critical relationship between logistical capability and operational limitations.

APPENDIX I  
A SITUATIONAL MAP OF ITALY



NOTES

1. Martin Blumenson, Anzio: The Gamble That Failed (New York: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1963), p. 2.
2. Kent R. Greenfield, ed., Command Decision (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1959), p. 35.
3. Samuel E. Morison, Strategy and Compromise (Boston: Little, Brown, 1958), p. 25.
4. Albert C. Wedemeyer, Wedemeyer Reports (New York: Henry Holt, 1958), p. 105.
5. Ernest J. King and Walter M. Whitehall, Fleet Admiral King (New York: Norton, 1952), p. 391.
6. U.S. Army, Biennial Report of the Chief of Staff of the United States Army, July 1, 1943 to June 30 1943, to the Secretary of War (Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office., 1943), p. 10.
7. Office of the Combined Chiefs of Staff, Trident Conference, May 1943 (Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943), pp. 315-341.
8. Blumenson, p. 44.
9. Trumball Higgins, Soft Underbelly (New York: MacMillan, 1962), p. 47.
10. Wynford Vaughan-Thomas, Anzio (New York: Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, 1961), p. 8.
11. Henry M. Wilson, Report By the Supreme Allied Commander to the Combined Chiefs of Staff on the Italian Campaign 8 January 1944 to 10 May 1944 (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1946), pp. 2-4.
12. Carlos D'Estes, Fatal Decision: Anzio and the Battle for Rome (New York: Harper Collins, 1991), p. 74.
13. Mark Clark, Calculated Risk (New York: Harper, 1950), p. 230.
14. Vaughan-Thomas, p. 20.
15. Department of Military Art and Engineering United States Military Academy West Point, Operations in Sicily and Italy (New York: United States Military Academy, 1947), p. 63.

16. Ibid., p. 64.
17. D'Estes, p. 121.
18. Blumenson, p. 55.
19. D'Estes, p. 122.
20. William Pagonis and Michael Krause, Operational Logistics and the Gulf War (Arlington VA: The Institute of Land Warfare, Association of the United States Army, 1992), p. 2.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Blumenson, Martin. Anzio: The Gamble that Failed. New York:  
J.B. Lippincott Company, 1963.
- Bohmker, Rudolf. Monte Cassino. London: Cassell & Company Ltd,  
1964.
- Clark, Mark. Calculated Risk. New York: Harper, 1950.
- D'Este, Carlo. Fatal Decision. New York: Harper, 1991.
- Department of Military Art and Engineering United States  
Military Academy West Point. Operations in Sicily and  
Italy. New York: United States Military Academy, 1947.
- Greenfield, Kent R., ed. Command Decisions. New York:  
Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1959.
- Higgins, Trumball. The Soft Underbelly. New York: MacMillan,  
1968.
- Historical Division, Department of the Army. Anzio Beachhead  
(22 January-25 May 1944). Washington DC: U.S. Government  
Printing Office, 1947.
- Jackson, W.G.F. The Battle for Italy. New York: Harper &  
Row , 1967.
- King, Ernest J. and Whitehall, Walter M. Fleet Admiral King.  
New York: Norton, 1952.
- Morison, Samuel E. Strategy and Compromise. Boston: Little,  
Brown, 1958.
- Office of the Combined Chiefs of Staff. Trident Conference,  
May 1943. Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office,  
1943.
- Pagonis, William and Krause, Michael. Operational Logistics  
and the Gulf War. Arlington VA: The Institute of Land  
Warfare, Association of the United States Army, 1992.
- Report by the Supreme Allied Commander Mediterranean to  
the Combined Chiefs of Staff on the Italian Campaign 8  
January 1944 to 10 May 1944. Washington DC: U.S.  
Government Printing Office, 1946.
- Sheppard, G.A. The Italian Campaign 1943-1945. New York:  
Frederick A. Praeger, 1968.

Starr, Chester G., ed. From Salerno to the Alps: A History of the Fifth Army 1943-1945. Washington DC: Infantry Journal Press, 1948.

U.S. Army. Biennial Report of the Chief of Staff of the United States Army, July 1, 1943 to June 30, 1943, to the Secretary of War. Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943.

Vaughan-Thomas, Wynford. Anzio. New York: Holt Rhinehart and Winston, 1961.

Wedemeyer, Albert C. Wedemeyer Reports. New York: Henry Holt, 1958.

Wilson, Henry M. Report by the Supreme Allied Commander to the Combined Chiefs of Staff on the Italian Campaign 8 January 1944 to 10 May 1944. Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946.